TUEBOR

We Will Protect

Vol. 5, Issue 3 A Publication of the Michigan State Police Training Division Summer 1999

RCMP Tackles Problem Solving

In psychology, there's an old saying that if you have a pulse, you have a problem. Police officers can appreciate this since the public often looks to them as solvers of problems. It is quite understandable, then, that police would look for a decision making formula that would help them do their job better and easier.

Not one to shrink from such a challenge, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has recently developed the CAPRA Problem Solving Model. CAPRA is an acronym which represents the following concepts:

Clients
Acquiring & Analyzing
Partnerships
Response
Assessment

Not just for administrators and policy makers, the CAPRA model has been adapted for all levels and has even become the methodology for the RCMP's Cadet Training Program. Those familiar with SARA (Scanning-Analysis-Response-Assessment) and Demming's Total Quality Management will recognize CAPRA as a development on these theories. The following article is a brief representation of the CAPRA model.

C = CLIENTS

Who is most affected, and what appears to be the problem?

All police service is structured by the fundamental principles of justice and human rights as set out in the Constitution, laws and policies. However, given the unique role of police, they also serve many diverse interests in the general public, the justice system, and the government. Consequently, police must assess and define problems in terms of the needs and expectations of clients.

Serving such a full range of clients, and weighing competing interests, requires that police accurately determine who is most affected. They must

then define problems so that everyone involved has an informed and common understanding. This initial stage is critical and will take time (and probably more than a few group discussions). It is dangerous to assume anyone knows at the outset what the problem is. A hurried definition will often result in groupthink and wasted effort in the wrong direction. Quite often, symptoms are mistaken for causes.

Consider the case of a police chief who is concerned about the lack of creativity coming from her staff or citizen advisory committee. She might think that the group is apathetic, overworked, or just doesn't understand what she expects of them. The real problem, however, might be her own reputation for rarely listening to or heeding recommendations. If the chief were to take the time to explore and clarify the problem at the outset, then she could discover this important fact and take steps to solve the real problem (her own behavior). If, on the other hand, she presses ahead aggressively, trusting her own appraisal of the problem, then nothing will likely change.

In the case of school shootings, juveniles possessing firearms may be part of a bigger socialization problem. If a plan addresses symptoms rather than root causes of a problem, the desired results (decreasing youth violence) will not be attained. It is also important during this stage to avoid scapegoating and blaming individuals or groups for the problem, which only further clouds the issue. This is a stage where conflict resolution techniques and negotiating skills can be very important. Finally, the statement of a problem should not imply that any particular solution is the correct one.

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A = ACQUIRING AND ANALYZING INFORMATION

What else do we need to know before we decide what to do?

Once clients define what appears to be the problem, the next step is to acquire and analyze information about the possible causes. The RCMP acquires and analyzes information of dramatically different kinds and various sources. Effective policing requires information beyond a specific case or incident at hand. The kind of policing that so dramatically reduced crime in New York City resulted from information on patterns of crime, cause-and-effect reasoning, community profiles, client/community perceptions and expectations, services available, etc. But most important is identifying *those factors that, if corrected, are likely to have the greatest impact*. Since there are almost always more problems or opportunities for improvement than time or energy to devote to them all, it is crucial to identify those solutions which offer the *greatest potential payoff*.

A useful concept here is known as the "Pareto Principle" It states that about 80 percent of the problems in any system are the result of about 20 percent of the causes. In schools, for example, most of the discipline problems are caused by a minority of the students. The Pareto Principle can be used to focus problem-solving efforts on those causes that have the greatest overall impact.

P = PARTNERSHIP

Who can help solve this problem?

Given the RCMP's client perspective and the growing complexity of the issues it addresses, developing *alternative solutions requires partnerships*. To identify, plan and coordinate solutions, multi-disciplinary teams are needed to bring together the appropriate knowledge, skills and resources for problem solving. These teams are increasingly from both police and non-police agencies. Partnerships should include specific clients *who have some responsibility* for the solution. These special community or advocacy groups, or their representatives, are often utilized on advisory committees.

It is best to select solutions on the basis of established criteria. These criteria include such questions as the following:

- Have the advantages and disadvantages of all possible solutions been considered?
- Have all the possible solutions been evaluated in terms of their impact or chance of success?
- What is the realm of practicality, in terms of resources, for each alternative?
- What might be the consequences if a solution fails?

R = RESPONSE

What should we do?

CAPRA problem solving requires that *responses* or *solutions* be shaped by client needs. For far too long, however, police have curtailed themselves, not on legalities, but on the parameters of past practice. The evolution of technology and policing has served to expand the array of responses available to the police. Police must see their authority as a resource for problem solving, not an obstruction. Enforcement is just one possible response. Education, crime prevention, and investigative services are also possible responses. Usually, some combination will be required. When there is agreement on a response to a problem, RCMP does a final *implementation* check using the acronym MEAL. If the solution is:

Moral,
Ethical,
Affordable, &
Legal

then, *DO IT!*

All RCMP are empowered to implement solutions if they have followed the CAPRA model. Consequently, planning and implementing the appropriate solution requires not only an understanding of police powers, but also the principles that guide the use of *discretion* when police utilize non-enforcement responses.

A = ASSESSMENT FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

How well did we do?

One should not assume that just by going through the preceding steps the actions implemented will solve the problem. The solution's *impact must be assessed*, preferably *in terms of measurable criteria* of success that all clients can agree on. Complementing traditional evaluation methods, the commitment of those responsible for implementing the solution will ensure that the process is *continually* improved.

The U.S. Army has an excellent "assessment" process called an After-Action Review, which can be examined on the next page.

Define problem in common terms with ***C**LIENTS* who are most affected.	***A**CQUIRE & **A**NALYZE* diverse data to find the causes that have the greatest impact.	Develop alternative solutions through ***P**ARTNERSHIPS* with clients who hold responsibility.	***R**ESPOND* if the plan meets criteria for success and is Moral, Ethical, Affordable, & Legal.	Use measurable criteria to ***A**SSESS* for continuous improvement.

Ready ... fire ... aim, aim, aim

What works for brigades in battle can work for any organization that takes planning seriously. Since the Vietnam War, the U.S. Army has employed a post-event evaluation called an After-Action Review. AARs are used to find out, immediately after a mission or in training, what went right, what went wrong, and what needs to be done better the next time.

At their most basic, AARs offer a step-by-step process similar to a debriefing. An After-Action Review can be used to supplement the CAPRA problem-solving model, as part of the Assessment, to help ensure continuous improvement. Here are the steps in conducting an AAR:

1) Review the intent of an operation: What was the plan?

The leader of the operation gets up and describes the plan to all the participants. It's important that everyone involved in the operation be present during the AAR, otherwise its value is minimized. The plan must be covered in detail. That way, everyone will know what was supposed to happen.

2) Analyze what happened: What did we actually do? Did we change the plan?

The leader and subordinate leaders describe to the group what did happen. If everyone is open enough to be truthful, any deviation from the plan will become apparent. If the plan was deviated from, the reasons should be discussed so adjustments can be made in future operations.

3) Capture the lessons learned and their implication for future action: What did we do well?

During this phase of the AAR, participants get to provide input from their perspectives. This reinforces the positive parts of the operation and identifies strengths.

4) Apply the lessons quickly back into action: What do we need to improve?

This is where members of the group identify the weak points of the operation and where more training or resources are required. No blame is fixed and everyone is encouraged to be honest and accept criticism constructively.

5) Develop a "Next Action" list.

This last phase is the development of a list or steps needed to be taken in order to improve the next time.

"The AAR is not a critique," stresses General Gordon Sullivan, 32nd Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army. "It's focused, participatory, discovery learning," says Lloyd Baird, a professor at the Boston University School of Management, who now teaches AARs. "You can conduct an AAR in 15 minutes. If it takes longer than an hour, you're doing it wrong." And most important: "Do it immediately, as close to the action as possible."

Based on information provided by L/Col. Daniel Rodeck, Michigan National Guard, and an article by John Grossmann, Midwest Express Magazine, Jan-Feb 1999.

All Michigan Police Officers Need Cause To Stop Commercial Motor Vehicles

Many police officers have received commercial motor vehicle enforcement training sometime in their career. Depending on when or from whom they received their training, some officers may have been informed that they could stop commercial motor vehicles — without cause — for an inspection. However, analysis of this issue by the Michigan State Police Motor Carrier Division shows that all Michigan police must meet a higher threshold.

Some states have interpreted the Code of Federal Regulations as not requiring "cause" for a commercial vehicle stop. But Michigan law (MCLA 480.17[2]) specifically requires "*reasonable cause*" to effect a commercial vehicle traffic stop. Michigan police should note, however, that reasonable cause for a stop can come from a violation of the Michigan Vehicle Code (Act 300), as well as the Motor Carrier Safety Act (MCSA, Act 181).

To dispel any confusion, just remember that all Michigan police officers need the same "reasonable cause" to stop a commercial motor vehicle as they do for any passenger vehicle. If you need further clarification, please contact the Michigan State Police Motor Carrier Division at 517-336-6195, or Sgt. Joseph M. O'Connor, JD, of the Executive Division, at 517-336-6266.

The Michigan State Police Motor Carrier Division will begin distributing a statewide training bulletin in January, 2000.

Retired New York Police Commissioner Jack Maple Speaks-Out on Ethics

Robert Volpe says his son, Justin, a New York police officer, cracked like a soldier in combat might do when he beat Haitian immigrant Abner Louima and then sodomized him with a stick. "It was war outside that night," he said. Now that New York's brutality trials have ended with Volpe's confession and the conviction of one police accomplice last week, let me say this. I think that's bull. I understand that a parent might need to make excuses for his kid. And as a police professional, I even agree there's a war on in the nation's streets. Despite the recent declines, violent crime last year was still 3.5 times higher than it was in 1961. But if this is war, Justin Volpe is no shellshocked soldier. He's a war criminal who deserves to do the prison time awaiting him now. If you want to talk about being overly stressed, try being a cleaning lady armed with a scrub brush going home at night in a bad neighborhood. That's much worse than what a cop faces. I feel sorry for Robert Volpe as a parent. But his son is not a victim.

The truth is, police brutality has been with us forever. So has corruption. The two feed on each other. We don't recruit from the Planet Perfect. We recruit from society. But things are vastly better than they were. The main thing we changed on the NYPD when I was deputy commissioner in the mid-1990s was accountability. The police weren't holding themselves accountable for fighting crime. Then we decided to change. We mapped crime out and deployed accordingly. And New York enjoyed the biggest crime declines in America in the 1990s. Now we need to be as accountable within the force as we are on the street. Police departments must map brutality and corruption complaints the same way we mapped murders and shootings. Then commanders must be held accountable to prevent their recurrence. Stings of every kind must be run for theft, brutality and discourtesy. Once caught, serious offenders should be interrogated like any criminal so we can make more cases on other bad cops.

Another answer is more transparency. Why do we have a weather channel in America but not a crime channel? People should be able to see what the latest local crime patterns are and to ask the precinct commander why their neighborhood doesn't get the same protection others do. Journalists and community leaders should be able to go on patrol with the cops to gain a better understanding of real police work, not just what they see on "NYPD Blue."

NYC NEEDS CPR

Courtesy ★ Professionalism ★ Respect

Some people think I coined the phrase "zero tolerance." But I hate what the words imply. Zero tolerance, a term I first saw in the media, is for people who wear red armbands, brown shirts and jack-boots. There's a vast difference between zero tolerance and enforcing quality-of-life issues like graffiti or teenagers throwing beer cans and pissing in the street. Zero tolerance suggests bicycles should be confiscated if they don't have effective bells. I think police should be reasonable. The code we had on the NYPD was that you can't break the law to enforce the law. To say Justin Volpe badly betrayed that code is an understatement.

Mayor Giuliani thinks the blue wall of silence has crumbled during the Louima case. I think the wall almost always crumbles when it needs to. Sometimes, the wall serves a purpose. There are such things as rats and stoolies, and nobody wants them in any walk of life. That's why Americans would rather have Monica Lewinsky as their daughter than Linda Tripp. All Linda Tripp did was blow the whistle. If Monica had been giving away national-security secrets, Linda would have been a hero. Cops need to be heroes to each other, but not at any cost. New York columnist Jimmy Breslin once had a great line about cops: they shouldn't be "a softball team with guns." They shouldn't be a group with more loyalty to one another than to the people they serve.

On another level, it's the New York cops who have a right to complain. They felt betrayed by the mayor when crime went down. The city had 33 million tourists and property values skyrocketed, but the police got zero-percent raises two years in a row. The saying was "zeroes for heroes." Salaries need to be raised tremendously in American policing. You get what you pay for. We have to start attracting candidates from real colleges, not ones where you send for your diploma on a matchbook cover. And we should require three years of training to be a police professional, not six months. People will say we don't have the time or money. If you want professionals, you have to spend both.

Finally, police departments simply must reflect ethnically the cities they serve. In New York — 26 percent black and 26 percent Hispanic, with a force that's 13 percent black and 17 percent Hispanic — that would take another 50 years to happen at the current pace. It needs to happen now. We've already thought "outside the box" on fighting crime. Let's do the same for recruiting. I'm not saying it'll be a better department statistically than it is now. But the community will know it looks like them, not like an occupying army. The police must have the trust of the citizens they serve. Volpe maimed that along with Louima's body. Both will take a long time to heal.

Reprinted from Newsweek, June 21, 1999. Maple's book, "The Crimefighters," will be published by Doubleday in October.

Number of Copies Printed: 4,400
Total Cost: $388.00 Cost Per Copy: $0.088